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Hitting the fields at ASES

A young soccer player celebrates a goal at the soccer tournament at ASES on Oct. 15. See more photos on page 9. /TIM YANO Staff photographer

Council questions significant increase for policing

by **JAMES MATTHEWS**
Times Staff

The cost of policing in Algonquin Highlands has increased significantly.

The township received on Oct. 4 the OPP Municipal Policing 2025 Annual Billing Statement. The cost for police services for 2025 will be $1,118,726 which represents an increase of $210,536 or 21 per cent.

The anticipated increase for police services in 2025 for the township equates to about three per cent of the total 2024 tax levy.

Jean Hughes, the township's treasurer, urged council during the Oct. 17 meeting to keep that levy hit in mind when discussions start to ink next year's municipal capital and operating budgets.

"In past we've not necessarily had a specific report to the OPP policing because it's a cost that we just have to pay," she said. "But it was a significant increase this year.

For 2025, the township is facing a large increase with a portion stemming from the 2023 final reconciliation which is $62,606. The adjustment accounts for the difference between the amount billed and the actual costs incurred in that year.

The most significant change for 2023 was between the actual versus estimated costs for overtime, contract enhancements, and court security.

In comparison to previous years, this is a substantial increase, Hughes said in a report to council.

Final reconciliation amounts brought forward in previous billing years have ranged from about $6,000 to about $12,000. The reconciliation is basically the municipality paying for service provided by the OPP above what the year's bill covered.

"So this $62,000 is very high in comparison," she said.

The remaining increase can be attributed to salaries and benefits which are increasing by 15 per cent. Operating costs are increasing by 13 per cent.

Per-property costs for base services, calls for service, estimated overtime, prisoner transportation, accommodation, and cleaning services will be $238.48 in 2025 compared to $206.18 in 2024.

That's an increase of $32.30 per property.

Municipal treasurers throughout Ontario reached out to their counterparts to share information for comparison purposes.

"There was lots of chatter with treasurers," Hughes said. "It seems the increases ranged from 16 per cent to 30 per cent throughout Ontario municipalities. So we're right in line.

"It's not just us, unfortunately. But it is a dictated cost. It's out of our control."

Three per cent of next year's budget could be eaten up by just the policing costs.

"I just need council to be aware," Hughes said.

"Prepare ourselves," Mayor Liz Danielsen said.

Along with treasurers, many mayors and county wardens have been lamenting the drastic increase in OPP contract costs.

"They (wardens' caucus) want a greater justification," Danielsen said. "I've also asked the county to dig through their files because we did a pretty substantial argument with the OPP and the province about the last major increase that we had."

It is hoped records from the last cost increase and its subsequent argument will bolster council's point of view this time around.

see NO ROOM page 2

Help in drug poisoning crisis needs community approach

by JAMES MATTHEWS
Times Staff

Public health officials and community partners have banded together to get a clearer picture of drug use trends and the current drug poisoning crisis.

Kate Hall, a health promoter at the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Public Health Unit (HKPR), said the current drug poisoning crisis is a complex community health issue fuelled by unregulated synthetically produced opioids contaminated by other substances.

"The drug poisoning crisis is really characterized by unprecedented data," she said when the public health unit's board met Oct. 17.

Health Canada data from 2023 shows that most drug overdose deaths occurred in British Columbia, Alberta, and in Ontario. Men aged 20 years to 59 years old were most greatly affected.

"Fentanyl was involved in most of these deaths, often mixed with stimulants," Hall said.

The impacts of the crisis obviously affects the drug user. But there are ripples felt by family, friends, and communities.

"The situational assessment report really could be used to further conversations in the community about ways to collaborate to reduce drug poisonings and deaths," she said.

A four-pillar approach has been adopted to meet the recent spike in drug poisoning incidents in Haliburton County, Northumberland County, and the City of Kawartha Lakes.

The four-pillar approach to addressing the drug poisoning crisis has gained credibility by public health agencies throughout Ontario. Those pillars are prevention, treatment and recovery, harm reduction, and community safety.

Integrated comprehensive treatment programs are required to effectively meet the crisis. That includes social services connections with all levels of health care professions.

Hall likened that to an "all of society approach" to the crisis.

Vidya Sunil, an epidemiologist at HKPR, said hospitalizations for drug overdoses and poisonings increased in 2021 in the region and again slightly in 2023.

Even though there's a rate increase, she said the numbers are small.

The number of deaths increased from 2018 with the highest number in 2021. That year saw a high of eight deaths in Haliburton County. There's been none so far this year, according to a graph of information provided by Ontario's chief coroner and presented during the board meeting.

Opioid deaths rose between 2018 and 2023 to a 205 death total over those six years. The deadliest years was 2021 with 50 deaths. Fentanyl was present in 86 per cent of those deaths in the health unit's jurisdiction.

Of morbidity and mortality incidents in 2023 in the HKPR region, Haliburton County made up four per cent of emergency department visits, six per cent of hospitalizations, and no deaths.

Most respondents to a drug use survey indicated that they used illicit drugs daily or more than once a week.

Of people surveyed with drug use experience, the most common method to ingest drugs was smoking. The relative few who indicated injection as the favour means of ingestion, more than two thirds reported that they have reused injection equipment in the last six months.

The stimulant of choice is crystal meth, while the more favoured depressant was indicated to be fentanyl.

Regarding identified local needs, 71 per cent of users surveyed indicated the greatest community support strategy would be having a safe place to live. Most wanted drug testing kits to increase harm reduction from drug use.

Cecil Ryall, Haliburton County's representative on the board, said any percentage of drug abuse is not good, unless it's zero per cent.

"For those of us in areas where we're trying to fight this battle there appears to be a non-winning battle," Ryall said. "It would be nice to be able to show that there is progress in the war."

Haliburton County is beginning to immerse deeper into the fourth pillar that is community involvement. The county is forming a new OPP board of representatives from the four lower tier municipalities.

"Part of that is going to be related to how to assist the police with this kind of stuff," he said. "Any information that we can get that would give them some insight as to where we can do that and the trends that are being set, if that's on the dashboard that would be great."

Hall said people with lived experience should be meaningfully engaged for input into a plan of action and in decisions about programs and services.

There's a need for advocacy toward a provincial drug strategy task force to focus on a provincewide response to the drug poisoning crisis.

There's also a need for real-time data on drug poisonings, she said.

Real time data would tailor a community response on a provincial and community level that's more prescient.

"Evidence shows that harm reduction is really a pathway for people to access other services," Hall said. "We have really great relationships through outreach directly with people in the community. That's part of the continuum of care."

No room to dispute policing costs

from page 1

The provincial police force bills a municipality on a per household basis. But here's dirty end of that stick for communities like Algonquin Highlands: Many of its households are occupied only seasonally.

They're cottages.

"We're questioning how much services are actually required by those seasonal residents as opposed to permanent residents as far as calls for service go," Danielsen said.

Deputy Mayor Jennifer Dailloux vented her frustration.

"This is one of the numerous things that we see here, but especially at county, where we have absolutely no control over the budgeting process," she said. "We are just given the bill and are expected to pay it.

"We are doing our utmost to try to keep taxpayer costs down within our township and within our county. A lot of that is because we are trying to offset these increased bills that come from agencies that we have absolutely no control over. It's one of the more frustrating thing about being on municipal council."

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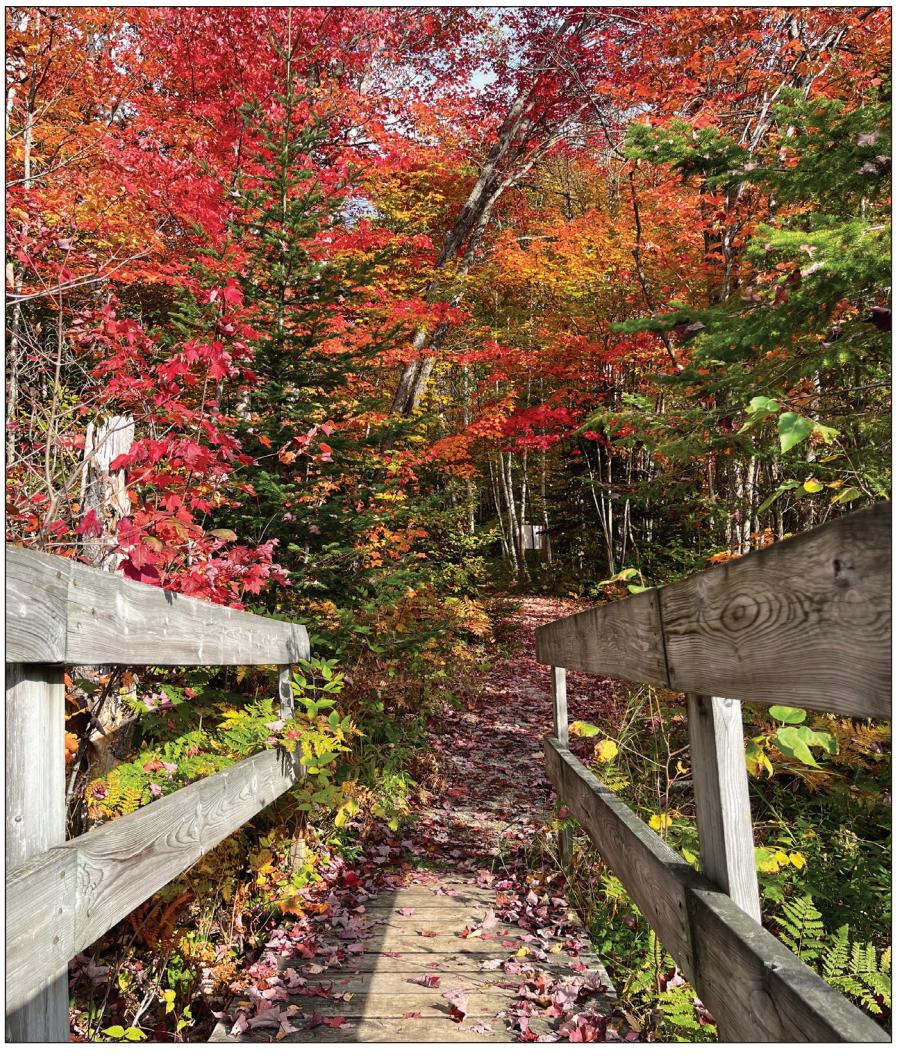

The seasons they are a-changin'

Taking in the fall colours at Snowdon Park. /Photo submitted by Lavdeep Jallandhra

Respiratory ailments on par for the season, says Bocking

by JAMES MATTHEWS
Times Staff

Respiratory illnesses are at typical seasonal levels in communities served by the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Public Health Unit.

There's been increases in patients presenting respiratory ailments at emergency departments at a couple of units in the province's eastern portion.

But Dr. Natalie Bocking, the local unit's medical officer of health, told board members when they met Oct. 17 that infections in the HKPR area are at the level expected for a typical season.

"From the Big Picture or a provincial context, we're where we would be expected to be in a typical respiratory season," she said.

People living under the umbrella of the public health unit can get updated information on a number of recently launched health data dashboards.

The respiratory infections dashboard tracks infections of COVID-19, influenza, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).

The mental health dashboard illustrates mental health indicators from the latest Canadian Community Health Survey with local information about emergency department visits and hospitalizations related to mental health.

There is also a portal that is a repository for data on substance overdose related dangers in the district. That includes emergency department visits, hospitalizations, and deaths.

Bocking said the best approach to prevention is vaccination.

Flu shots became available early this month for the most vulnerable and high priority populations, including those hospitalized, health care workers, and residents in long-term care and retirement homes.

Free flu shots for the public aged six months and older will be available Oct. 28 at participating pharmacies and primary care teams.

Families with infants born this year and high-risk children up to 24 months old will now have access to the publicly funded new RSV immunization. Access to the RSV immunization can be made through their health care provider. Newborns born during the 2024/25 respiratory season, while at hospitals, will also be offered the vaccine.

The RSV prevention program expanded this fall to include all retirement home residents.

"Let's all continue to protect ourselves and our community by staying up to date on our vaccinations, which include influenza, COVID-19 and RSV," Bocking said. "Both COVID-19 and flu vaccines are available at local pharmacies and primary care teams. By doing so, we are ensuring our critical health care services are there for those who need them most."

The Health Unit will be providing the COVID-19, flu and RSV vaccine to eligible children six months to five years of age starting in November. To book an appointment, call the Health Unit at 1-866-888-4577 ext. 1507.

While vaccinations prevent infection, there are ways people can stave off transmission.

Public health officials recommend skipping the holiday party if you're not feeling well and to stay home when you are sick. People should consider wearing a mask in crowded indoor spaces and when recovering from illness.

> "We're where we would be expected to be in a typical respiratory season.
>
> — DR.NATALIE BOCKING, MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR HKPR DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT

"If you are recovering from illness, wear a mask for 10 days after your symptoms started," Bocking said.

Wash your hands often and clean high-touch surfaces frequently. If you host or attend a holiday gathering, clean high-touch surfaces and encourage guests to wash their hands frequently or use hand sanitizer.

"Protect our health care services," she said. "Doing what you can to limit the spread of illness will help ensure our health care workers are available for those who need them most."

Small business week kicks off, finishing with awards and gala

by EMILY STONEHOUSE
Tines Staff

It's a celebration of successes for all the small businesses in our community.

Oct. 21 marks the start of Small Business Week in Haliburton County, and Amanda Conn, the executive director of the Haliburton Highlands Chamber of Commerce, looks forward to spending the week acknowledging and honouring the businesses that make our community tick.

With over 270 small businesses in the county, Conn recognizes that these entrepreneurs are absolutely crucial in developing the community as a destination for both visitors and locals alike. "Small businesses are essential in Haliburton County," said Conn. "Our small businesses are the county's life blood."

The week kicked off with a meet and greet, hosted at Dominion Hotel in Minden, and sponsored by the BDC. The focus of the networking event was to connect like-minded individuals in the small business community.

The next event is scheduled for Oct. 23 at the Link in Haliburton, and is a free session focusing on Bookkeeping for entrepreneurs.

The week will wrap up with the annual Community and Business Achievement Awards and Gala at the Haliburton Legion on Oct. 25. "We are super excited about the gala this year," said Conn, noting that there are several new categories and awards this year, highlighting small businesses in the area.

One award she is particularly proud of is the newly featured "established business of the year" nod. "We honour new business of the year each year," said Conn, "but this is an opportunity to look at the businesses that have been around for a long time."

Gala tickets are still available and can be purchased by visiting haliburtonchamber.com.

"Such a huge percentage of our employers, of our economy, are small businesses," said Conn. "It's nice to set aside a little time each year to celebrate them."

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WINTER PARKING
From Nov 1st to Apr 30th overnight parking is illegal from midnight to 8:00 AM on township roadways and parking lots. Parking in the turning circle of a cul-de-sac is prohibited during all hours. Vehicles parked in areas that interferes with snow removal will be towed away and/or ticketed at the owner's expense.

PA DAY CAMP
Come and join recreation staff in a ½ day PA Day camp on Friday October 25th, 2024. More information at www.mindenhills.ca/recreation.

MINDEN HILLS Cultural Centre

MINDEN HILLS CULTURAL CENTRE

- Local artists Gary Blundell and Victoria Ward's exhibit Burner Herzog is on display at The Agnes Jamieson Gallery until November 23rd.
- Annual "Haunting in Minden Hills" is taking place at the MHCC on October 26th. See separate ad for details.
- PA Day Open House on October 25th. Activities from 10am – 4pm.

For more information on all the programs and exhibits email culturalcentre@mindenhills.ca or call 705-286-3763.

SCOTCH LINE LANDFILL TRASH OR TREAT EVENT
Visit the Scotch Line Landfill October 31st from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. for our drive through Trash or Treat Event! We have lots of decorations to see and candy to hand out. Ghosts, goblins, zombies, and witches welcome!

COUNCIL MEETINGS VIRTUAL & IN-PERSON
Council and Closed Session meetings are currently being conducted in-person (Council Chambers, 7 Milne St., Minden) and with electronic participation. Meetings begin at 9:00 am unless otherwise noted. The scheduled upcoming meetings are:

- **October 31 – Regular Council Meeting**
- **November 14 -regular Council Meeting**

Members of the Public are invited to observe Council proceedings by attending in-person or via the live-stream link on the Township CivicWeb Portal.

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Minden Kin Club presents the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation with a $50,000 cheque towards the Here for You campaign for diagnostic imaging tools including the new CT scanner, state of the art mammography equipment and replacement of outdated x-ray equipment. /Submitted

Kin Club donates $50,000 towards Here for You campaign

by **THOMAS SMITH**
Editor

The Minden Kin Club has donated $50,000 to the "Here For You" campaign for digital imaging tools.

"We made a donation of $50,000 towards the imaging program at the Haliburton Hospital. There is a really strong need in the community for it," says Andy Rickard, president of the Minden Kin Club. "Our motto is to serve the community's greatest need. When we heard the presentation on the benefit of this to the community, we decided that it was something greatly needed by the community."

"Over the years, we have donated things to Highlands Crest and things like that," says Jim Carrell. "If I am not mistaken, I think that this is the largest donation that this club has made.

"They were invited to our meeting so that they could explain what they are doing. What is most important to us, as the Minden club, is that they have a plan for both the Minden and the Haliburton hospital sites," says Rickard.

"They do have a very solid plan to try and serve the county's healthcare needs from the two sites. People are still very bitter about the closing of the Minden ER because it was not well explained," says Rickard. "The presentation from them explained a detailed plan to use both sites and expand on both sites."

"If somebody like [Nelson] had come and explained things to the community to start with, I don't think there would have been near the amount of animosity," said long-time Kin Club member Tom Prentice.

"There was a good plan and it made sense. It just wasn't communicated well," says Rickard.

"This new group that are in there are real go-getters and they have a plan for this county, which is more important than strictly Minden or Haliburton, it is the county that is going to benefit," says Carrell.

"They were very clear that without improving the technology, there is no way they were going to attract ambitious doctors. A doctor can choose to work just about anywhere right now," says Rickard. "You have to have a way to make them choose here."

"HHHS and HHHSF have been meeting with community members and service groups over the past year to discuss the growing needs of healthcare in our community, to share HHHS' future plans, to let the community know how they can get involved and to hear directly from people who live and love it here," says Veronica Nelson, president and CEO of HHHS. "Meeting with the Kin Club members was particularly impactful as we had the opportunity to share a home-cooked meal together, get to know each other and respond to their many questions. By the end of the evening, the Club members knew exactly the impact a donation would make and so I was pleasantly surprised when we received their donation on the spot. HHHS thanks the Kin Club members and their volunteer group for their dedication to our communities and helping us optimize healthcare in the Highlands."

"We are a small club, but we all pull equally. It is a friendly club, it is a happy club, and a good place to meet," says Rickard.

"This [donation] was all possible because of our two main events," says Rickard. "That's the only way we were able to raise this money." The Kin Club puts on the Ice Racing events in the winter and the Minden Truck Pull.

Prentice says that the Kin Club's biggest funding source is the truck pull, through admission prices and camping fees. The second biggest is the ILR Car Control School that makes use of the ice racing tracks at the Minden Fairgrounds, and their third biggest fundraising event is the ice races that happen during the winter.

"We build the track that the car controls school is on. We maintain the track and [ILR Car Control School] rents it from us. He is very important to us as a club," says Rickard.

Everyone is welcome to join the Minden Kin Club. For those interested in joining, the Kin Club welcomes anyone to approach their members or to contact them through the Minden Kin Club Facebook page.

"The Minden Kin Club generous donation will support the "Here for You" campaign for diagnostic imaging tools including the new CT scanner, state of the art mammography equipment and replacement of outdated x-ray equipment. As well the donation is being generously matched by Christine Tutssel and Rob Holl for a total impact of $100,000 towards urgently needed and life-changing equipment," says Melanie Klodt Wong, executive director of the HHHSF. "This donation is a testament that the confidence and trust in HHHS is growing. I am thrilled that the relationship between Minden leaders like the Minden Kin Club and HHHS is positive and supportive, and we are looking to the future together. All we can do is learn from the past and focus on what we can do to make things better for a healthier future. The "Here for You" campaign is the beginning of things to come at HHHS and in support of healthy communities in the Highlands. I am looking forward to more dialogue and finding creative ways to work together to serve the needs of our community."

Haunted Forest Walk brings the boos for fourth year

by **THOMAS SMITH**
Editor

Ghouls and goblins in Minden Hills know that life's no fun without a good scare.

"I love scaring people. I think it is great," says Rachel Velkovski, founder of the Haunted Forest Walk. Velkovski says that she never had trick-or-treaters visiting her property. Living where she describes as 'the middle of nowhere,'Velkovski realized that there could be a demand for a scary Halloween experience that was geared towards teenagers and adults. Since 2021, Velkovski, her husband Allan and a gang of volunteers have been converting her property into the Haunted Forest Walk, Go Away Acres. It was the perfect event to run during the COVID-19 pandemic as it was outside, could be socially distanced, and allowed for participants to leave their house for a fun activity on Halloween.

The Haunted Forest Walk is separated into 10 to 12 themes. Some popular themes that are mainstays for the experience include the haunted cornfield, mad surgeon, radioactive spill, and the 'poison pirate'. Visitors to the experience walk through different displays that are based on these themes. Music, animatronics, props, and 'jumpers' are all used to create a terrifying Halloween experience. Every year, the Velkovski family tries to make the Haunted Forest Walk longer, better, and scarier.

"It takes about two weeks to set up, that includes building the props and testing out equipment," said Velkovski.

"It's been huge," said Velkovski. "We have people that come back every single year."

"Every year, we have two or three people that don't make it all the way through," said Velkovski. "Our code word is chicken. It isn't very original."

The fee to experience the Haunted Forest Walk is $3. All money gathered from this is donated to local charities. Last year, the Haunted Forest Walk had over 500 participants. The funds raised were donated to two local food banks.

The Haunted Forest Walk takes around five to 10 minutes to walk through, depending on your pace and level of cowardice. This Haunted Forest Walk is not for the faint hearted and cowardly. It is not recommended for children under the ages of 10. Everyone that is looking to get frightened is welcome to attend the event.

Every survivor of the Haunted Forest Walk will be given some candy for their bravery, said Velkovski.

Velkovski is grateful for the support of the community and interest in the event and their wonderful volunteers. Velkovski would also like to thank Castle Lumber of Carnarvon for donating lumber for the event, Voimer Group for their assistance with advertising the event, Easton's Valu-Mart for their donation of candy, and Haliburton Bus Lines for their donation of a special prop for a new theme this year.

The Haunted Forest Walk will take place from Oct. 25 to 27 this year and can be visited from 7 to 10 p.m. The event is located at 1043 Turntable Drive in Minden Hills.

The Haunted Forest Walk is not recommended for children under the age of ten, or "those who are easily scared." All proceeds from the walk are donated back to local charities. /FILE

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InOtherWords

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Letters to the Editor must be signed and include phone number. Unsigned letters will not be published. Email must include name and phone number. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

Print Subscriptions 1 yr/ $51 (taxes included). Published each Wednesday by White Pine Media
To Subscribe to the Print or Digital edition, email subscriptions@haliburtonpress.com or call (705) 286-1288.

Regaining trust

ONE OF the reasons my family decided to move to Minden around five years ago was because the Minden ER was right around the corner. With aging parents, it was important to me to have an ER nearby if they ever needed it. My father loves the outdoors, tinkering in the garage, and having campfires. Due to a medical issue, my father's balance is not the same as it once was and due to a combination of pride and stubbornness, often refuses to use his walker.

A house in Minden meant that my parents could live their quiet lives in the country that they had always dreamed about, while also having the modern amenities of the Minden ER nearby. The best of both worlds.

In 2023, I heard that the Minden ER was closing and my heart sunk. I began to question the decision to move from the city to Minden in the fear that my father would not have access to medical care when he needed it.

THOMS SMITH
Editor

I have already written about a horrifying incident this year with my father needing emergency medical attention. After waiting in the Haliburton ER, he was transported to the Peterborough Regional Health Centre. Despite chest pains, he was given the choice to turn around and go back to Haliburton to avoid the bumpy ride. My father continued on and received the necessary medical attention and treatment to catch the blood clots found in his lungs.

Time is of the essence during a medical emergency. Having to drive nearly an hour and a half for care is unacceptable.

The HHHS did not have the necessary medical imaging equipment to find the clots in his lungs. If Haliburton had the proper medical equipment ready, he would have been spared the agonizing ambulance trip to Peterborough.

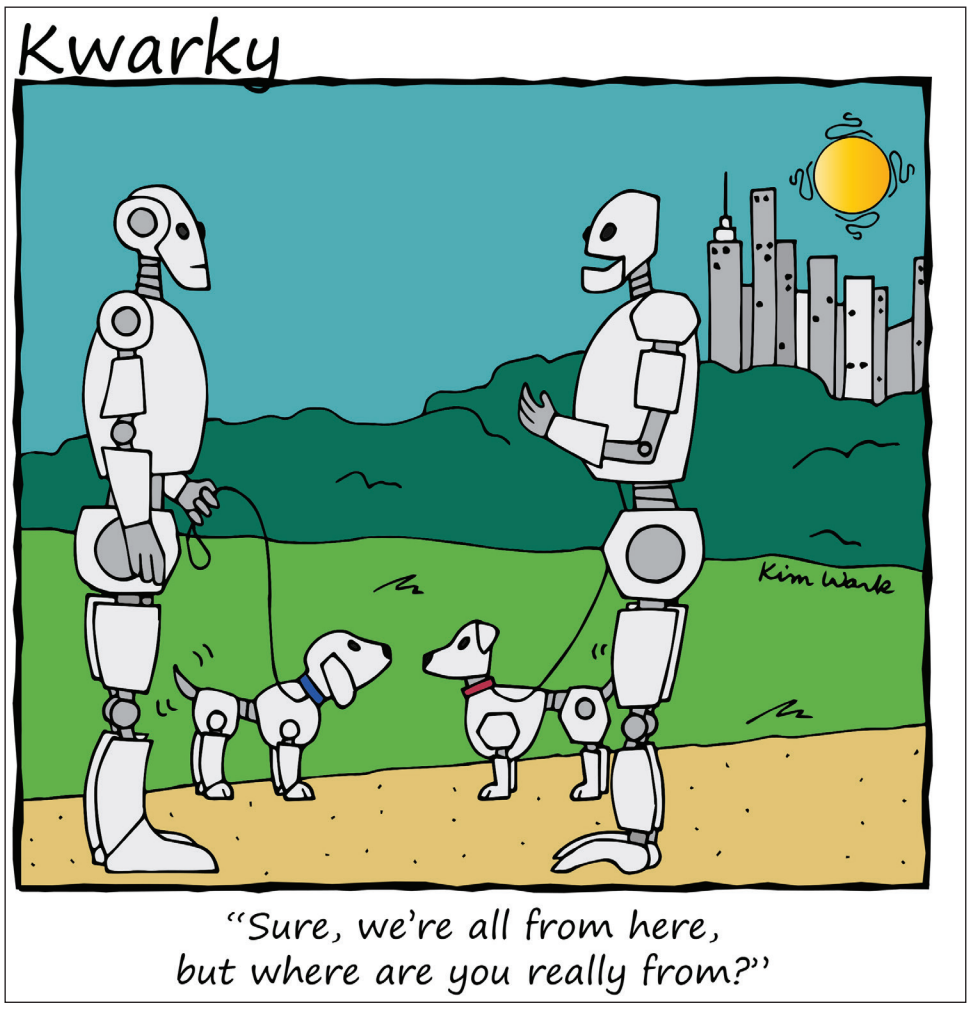
The Minden Kin Club is composed of members that have been serving the community of Minden for many, many years. After catching wind of their donation of $50,000 to the HHHS "Here for You" campaign for diagnostic imaging, I knew that I wanted to talk with them.

In our conversation, the Kin Club members shared that people in the community still have deep feelings of resentment, confusion, and anger over the Minden ER closing. Previously, I had not been convinced that the HHHS can adequately serve Minden and the rest of Haliburton County for healthcare. I feared that the closing of Minden ER was a sign for further closings and cutbacks to come.

Kin Club President Andy Rickard told me that Minden will greatly benefit from the Here For You Campaign. The Kin Club was also impressed with Veronica Nelson explaining what plans the HHHS has for the Minden ER site. Their plan, the leadership, and hope for a brighter future was shown to the Kin Club at their meeting.

The closing of the Minden ER was not well explained. I am still left scratching my head over the way things were done, such as why the newer building was closed over the older one, the wrongdoings of violating the Municipal Act through a closed session meeting on the closing of Minden ER, the list goes on.

If the Kin Club, as a voice of the community, can see that the HHHS has plans to service all of Haliburton County and is willing to contribute $50,000 towards their Here for You Program, then I am filled with hope. I could see the glimmer in their eyes knowing that bringing the imaging devices will bring a positive change to Minden. It will save more lives and possibly entice more doctors to the area.



Circular thinking

LAST WEEK while hunting grouse in heavy cover in a new area, we decided to end the hunt and go back to the vehicles. I had a rough idea of the direction we needed to go in and set out towards it. But before I could take two steps, a younger hunter in our group pulled out his phone and noted that he had pinned the location of our vehicle on Google Maps and so we followed him back to the vehicles in a more direct and unerring route. Worse still, we stepped out of the bush within feet of them.

This made me sad.

You see, that's when I realized that my generation might be the last to experience the joy of walking in circles deep in the bush. Heck, if this keeps up, outdoors people from here on in might only know the monotony of walking with certainty and confidence straight to their destination – which frankly makes for a boring campfire story.

STEVE GALEA
Beyond 35

It's unfortunate really.

Say what you like, but there is something magical about walking by the same unique rock six times on your attempt to get back to your vehicle. It's the main reason why people my age have a better understanding of déjà vu.

Typically, you'd pass it the first time and note, "Hey, look at that rock. It looks just like Sir Winston Churchill."

On the second pass, you'd say, "Wow, who would have thought there are two rocks in the same stretch of woods that look like Sir Winston Churchill?"

On the third time around, you might quip, "You know, I think this property was once owned by a person who really admired Sir Winston Churchill."

It generally takes about six passes before you realize that you've been walking in circles and have passed the same Winston Churchill rock at least six times.

This sort of thing causes you to stop and think things through.

That's when someone says, "Look, there is a recently used well-worn trail right there. It'll probably lead us right out to the road. Let's follow it."

Ten minutes later, after a long circuitous walk, you will be admiring the same rock.

Oh sure, after some discussion and finger pointing (generally in entirely different directions) you will eventually stumble out on the road, though it might not necessarily be one where people speak the same language as you.

Yet before that happens you will have experienced a wide range of emotions – everything from the joy of realizing that you might never have to mow the lawn again to the hard realization that you are going to miss your favourite dinner because the kids will finish it before it even gets cold. It's exhilarating.

All these things are what the old timers I grew up with referred to as "character building."

Sadly, all this new technology has put an end to that for these kids. They will never know the gamut of emotions incurred by getting hopelessly lost or spending an uncomfortable night in the woods within sight of their vehicle.

I guess, if you think about it from a safety and time management perspective, this is a good thing. Plus, if you learn to use and follow these electronics, I'm pretty sure you'll never get loopy in the woods again.

InOtherWords

Columns and Letters to the Editor

Grasping the wisps

I READ *Living With Dementia* by Darce Fardy (Nimbus, 2024) because I need to keep abreast of who's publishing what relating to dementia to fine-tune the hunt for someone to publish my memoir about living with dementia. Not my dementia, not personally experienced as Darce's was, but nevertheless a close companion for a long time. This book made me sad.

At age 82, Darce was diagnosed with dementia, Alzheimer's type. He and his wife, Dorthea, decided to go public about their experience with the disease; they became very involved with the Alzheimer's Association as spokespersons and advocates, and Darce successfully proposed to write a semi-regular column for the *Halifax Chronicle Herald*. *Living With Dementia* is a compilation of columns written over six years, from shortly after his diagnosis until two years before his death shortly before his 90th birthday.

The book made me sad because the voice of dementia is – in Darce's case and in my own experience – *a cri de coeur* to grasp the vapours of self as they float away.

From the outside, this looks in the early stage like egotism, a demand to remain whole at whatever cost. Darce dates his analysis of the progression of his disease and how he is managing from his diagnosis at age 82, but clearly his dementia was well on its way by then.

FAY MARTIN
Poke, Peel, Pair, Ponder

Darce retired from a long career with the CBC at age 59, which seems young; there is no explanation offered except that he was 'encouraged' to quit, but created his own poorly paid contract job as the first Review Officer tracking requests for information from the provincial government. After eleven years, at age 75, he was encouraged to leave that job – he suspects because he was effective, but also admits he was experiencing some difficulty with details. Refusing to stop working, he founded and was the sole worker-bee in the Nova Scotia Right to Know Coalition for which, at age 81, he received a Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal. Only then is he diagnosed; his 'family began to notice' memory difficulties that Darce attributes to being a poor listener.

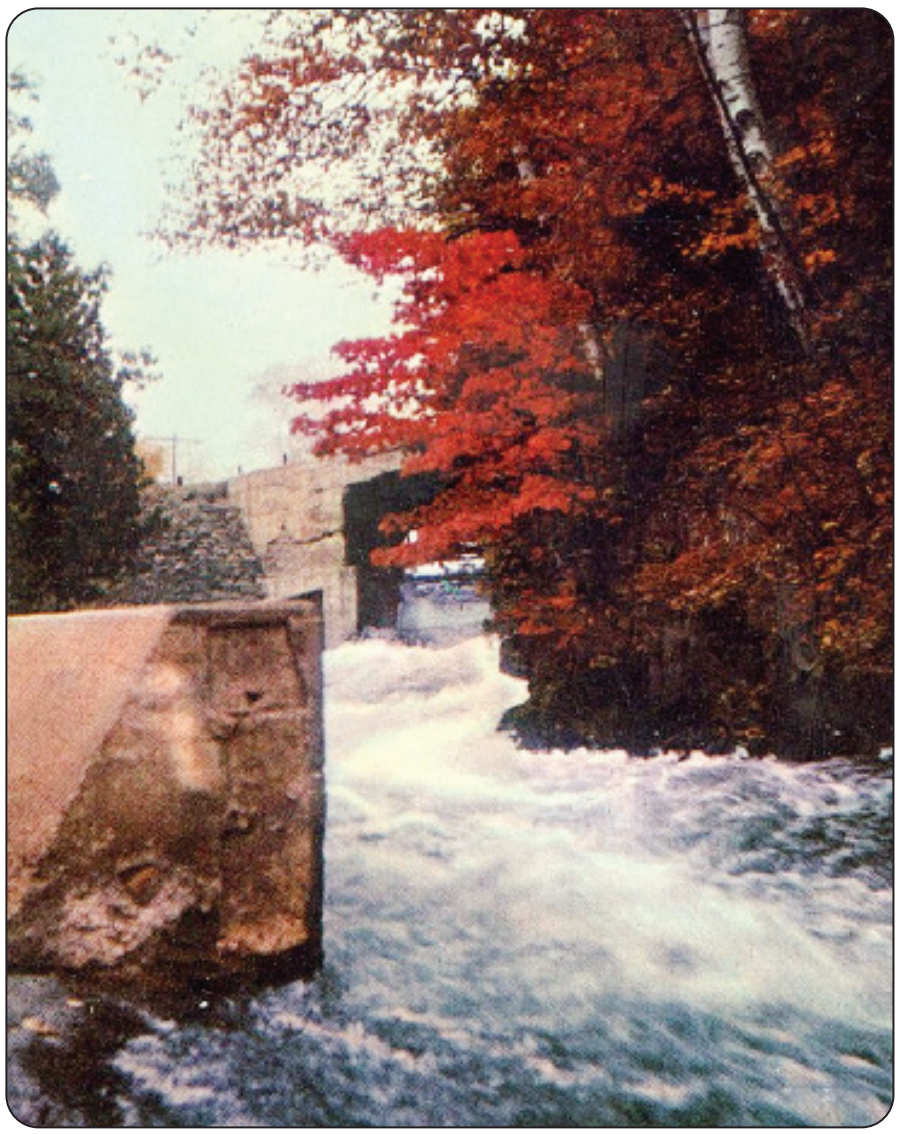
In the middle stage, when the disease is advanced enough that it becomes visible to the discerning eye, we see in Darce's columns the conundrum of a mind that can't see clearly reporting on its own functioning. Within two years of his diagnosis, he has his first comeuppance with physical malfunction: he has an inexplicable serious fall. He reports that he'd been told in conjunction with diagnoses that instability was to be expected, but he eschews the idea of using a cane – he continues to hate all mobility aides until he loses the energy to hate. The man who is proudly public about dementia is demolished by evidence of physical frailty. He clings desperately to his gym connection, in part to retain his persona as physically fit and a great walker, but also because 'all the experts' say exercise delays the symptoms of dementia. He is strongly committed to being the poster boy for doing dementia right, but in the end everybody knows he can't win. The question is always how hard should we push for performance.

Darce's columns become increasingly repetitive, lists of visitors, congratulatory recognition of the accomplishments of others, recurring admonishment to stay positive, occasional riffs about when and how his final exit should take place, continuous appreciation for the practical care of his wife and children and his ongoing inclusion in extended family events, even as it becomes a blur, a distancing world seen through a glass darkly. His last several columns, written 'with increasing doses of intervention from Dorthea, his Editor-in-Chief', were not published or publishable – perhaps Dorthea stopped reminding Darce what he planned to write about or didn't tell him she didn't send them off. It seems they stopped having purpose for writer or reader.

The epilogue reports that Darce became increasingly preoccupied with being a burden to his wife and died 'at the time and place of his own choosing', which suggests he may have had medical assistance in dying. In earlier columns, he references the discussion about prior consent for MAID and the implications for people with dementia. Four years before his death he considers that he has lived too long, but then bounces back to what sometimes feels like mandated optimism and jolliness. Dr. Kenneth Rockwood, whose introduction and afterword may have provided a required medical seal of approval for the book, concludes 'The lesson we should take from Darce Fardy's [life] is that if dementia befalls us, we should aim to live as fully as we can.'

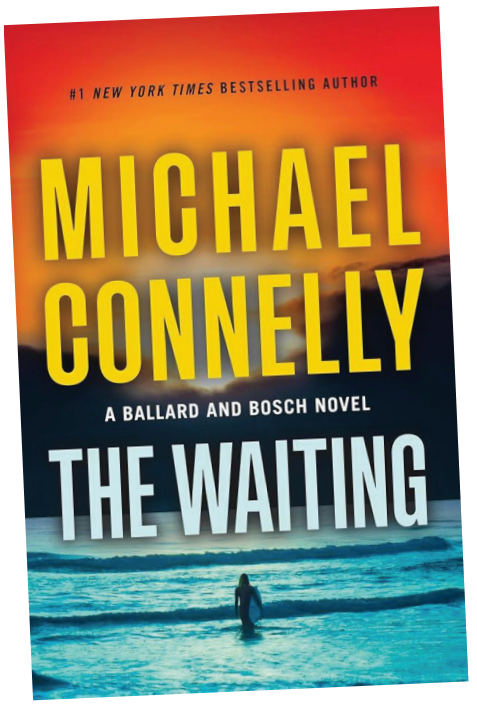
Who could disagree with that? Still, watching a person clutch at the wisps of what made him who he was makes me very sad.

Minden Memories



This postcard shows buttermilk falls looking towards the bridge on scenic Highway 35. /Photo courtesy of the Minden Hills Cultural Centre

HCPL's Book of the Week



Renée Ballard and the LAPD's Open-Unsolved Unit link a recently arrested man's DNA to the infamous Pillowcase Rapist, who terrorized Los Angeles twenty years ago. As Ballard and her team close in on the suspect, they face a complex web of secrets and legal challenges. After her badge, gun, and ID are stolen, Ballard must handle the situation on her own, leading her to seek help from Harry Bosch. Meanwhile, Bosch's daughter Maddie joins the cold case unit with Ballard, though her interest in the work hides a deeper, personal motive.

The Waiting by Michael Connelly is available to borrow from the Haliburton County Public Library.

Wilson continues her pilgrimage of remembrance

by **THOMAS SMITH**
Editor

"In the Footsteps of Heroes" will be presented by Belinda Wilson on Sunday, Nov. 3 at 1 p.m. held at the Irondale Church, located at 1019 Elm Road in Irondale, Ontario. Wilson is a longtime supporter of the Royal Canadian Legion, having been a member of the Fenelon Falls Legion. She is an avid military history enthusiast and comes from Coboconk. The talk is part of the Service, Courage, and Sacrifices series presented by Bark Lake Cultural Developments.

As a child, Belinda Wilson always respected those that defended our country in the Canadian Armed Forces. The first time she heard "In Flanders' Fields," the Canadian Armed Forces became an important aspect of her life and her interests.

"I have been a member of the Royal Canadian legion for about 25 years," says Wilson. "It seemed important. I was so happy when the Legion changed their member rules. Acknowledging the sacrifices that have been made is important to me."

In 2013, Belinda Wilson was chosen to be the Ontario Delegate to go on the Royal Canadian Legion's Pilgrimage of Remembrance. Throughout this pilgrimage, Wilson took part in a two week journey through France and Belgium. She visited the Somme, Passchendaele, Vimy, Dieppe, and Juno and experienced monuments, cemeteries, and battlefields.

"When we were there, people would come up to you and start to talk. Even though you aren't understanding what they are saying, you knew what they were saying. They were thanking us," says Wilson.

Belinda WIlson stands on Juno beach in 2013 while participating in the biennial Legion Pilgrimage of Remembrance. /Submitted

When Wilson was visiting Juno beach, French citizens expressed their appreciation for the sacrifices that Canadians made during WW2.

Wilson's talk covers WW1 and WW2 from the perspective of what she experienced visiting the battle sites in Europe.

However, her presentation isn't your typical history lesson. Wilson is a singer and songwriter who will perform five original songs throughout her presentation on Sunday, Nov 3. Three of the songs are her originals with two being written by her ex-performing partner Rick Hughes. Wilson and Hughes released an album in 2004 called *Thank God for Poppies*. November of 2024 will be the 20th anniversary of their album. The CD of the album was sold in Royal Canadian Legions across Ontario as a fundraiser.

"When you apply for the Pilgrimage of Remembrance, you have to explain why you are wanting to go, what you will do when you come back, and how you will spread the word after you are over there."

After standing on Juno beach, Wilson says that she could feel the fear, heartache, and nerves of the Canadians that landed there. She was entirely moved from the experience. She says that the waters of the English Channel allowed her to better understand the feeling that the boys did landing during WW2.

From 2013 to 2024, Wilson has presented "In the Footsteps of Heroes" 95 times.

"I have been doing it because I keep getting requests to do it," says Wilson. "I have done presentations as far west as Sarnia and as far east as Ganonoque."

Wilson says that she wants the stories she shares to make the audience think and remember the importance of the sacrifices that these heroes made for our freedom.

"It is the interaction with people while I present," says Wilson. "That is the most important part."

"I am not a historian. Neither am I a scholar," says Wilson. "I am presenting to promote remembrance and sharing stories about people to make them think."

"It is not a history lesson," says Wilson. "It is a journey."

Tickets for Wilson's "In the Footsteps of Heroes" can be purchased over the phone by calling 7054578438. Admission for this event is by donation.

All funds raised from the event will be going to Bark Lake Cultural Developments, a registered charity formed in 2012 to preserve Irondale's history and heritage. Their aim is to preserve the Irondale Church, educate the public on Indigenous people's history and colonization of the Irondale area, create and maintain a community museum and memorial garden, and to advance religion by allowing their facility to be used for non-denominational religious services.

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Wildcats take on the Jags

ASES Wildcats took on the JDH Jaguars last week for the Jr. Co-Ed soccer recreational tournament.
/TIM YANO Staff photographer

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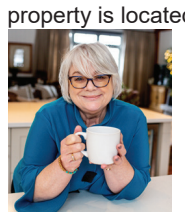

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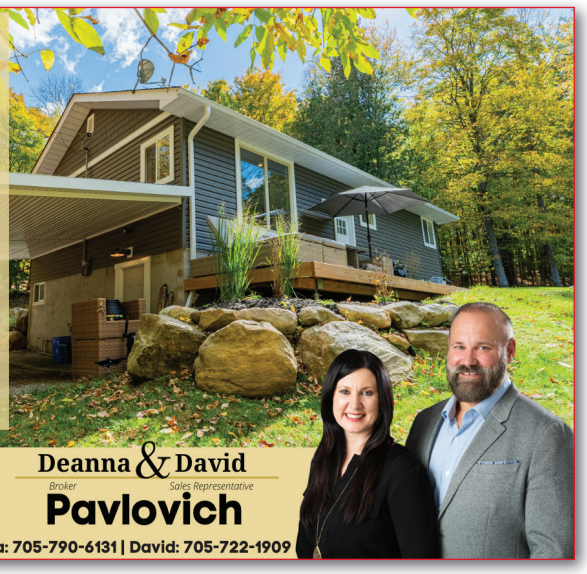

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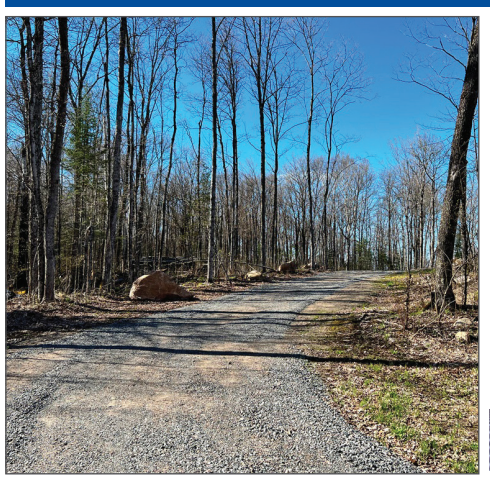

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While Mabel's birth came with complications, the team at Sick Kids saved her life. /Photo submitted

Moving for Mabel, a marathon that means so much

by **EMILY STONEHOUSE**
Tines Staff

It was a 'normal' pregnancy. Full term. And aside from a little extra nausea, Chyna Williams shared that her pregnancy with Mabel was the easiest she had experienced.

In 2021, Chyna and her husband, Sam, residents of Haliburton, found out they were expecting a baby. A little girl, to add to their crew of two boys, Olly and Jude.

"I did all the things right," Chyna said, reflecting on her research she had put into her delivery. Birth meditations, hypno-therapy, online videos.

But nothing could have prepared the couple for Dec. 10; the day Mabel came into the world.

Right on track, Chyna went into labour. But that's when things started going sideways. She suffered from a 15 inch uterine rupture, resulting in a massive blood loss, and doctors losing Mabel's heartbeat. The whole experience was a blur to Chyna. "I remember pediatricians running, I remember someone screaming about a blood transfusion, while they were calling Code Pink."

A Code Pink is the hospital messaging for a cardiac arrest in patients less than 18 years old.

Mabel had experienced Hypoxic Ischemic Encephalopathy, or HIE upon birth, meaning that a lack of oxygen and blood flow had resulted in brain damage. "It can be mild, moderate, or severe, and Mabel was severe," recalled Chyna, her voice quivering with the memory.

Mabel was rushed to Sick Kids Hospital with Sam, while Chyna was airlifted to Mount Sinai to recover. At the time, they had been told the worst of the worst news; it was likely that Mabel would not survive. She had been experiencing seizures upon her arrival at Sick Kids, and the outcomes of her life expectancy were uncertain.

"They told me many times that she's probably not coming home," choked Chyna, through tears. "So the fact that she's sitting in my back seat right now is pretty wild."

Nearly three years later, Mabel makes her presence known. Throughout the duration of the interview with Chyna, the little girl babbled, cooed, and giggled; her excitement about life palpable.

During those first few weeks in the world, Mabel stayed at Sick Kids hospital in Toronto. It was here that Chyna and Sam, through their own physical and emotional recovery, watched Mabel like a hawk. She was monitored for seizures, for cerebral palsy, for any sort of delays.

But against all odds; with a team of professionals in her corner, Mabel began to thrive.

After one month, Chyna and Sam were given the news they had been waiting for. "They [the doctors] had collectively decided that she had made a miraculous recovery," said Chyna, her voice lighter, and suddenly filled with optimism and hope.

Mabel continues to grow and thrive, and in October, 2022, she was diagnosed with autism. "We saw the signs early on," recalled Chyna, "we saw as early as eight months. But an autism diagnosis was not heartbreaking to us. Autistic people are just people."

Chyna and her family have continued to learn and advocate for those with autism, telling their story of miraculous Mabel as inspiration. She shared that raising a child with autism presents a bit of a learning curve, as "everything feels entirely new," but that as a whole, it's truly a blessing.

"If you're ever intimidated by socializing with someone with autism, just watch their siblings," Chyna said, noting that Mabel's two older brothers, Olly and Jude, are the lights in her life. "I don't even think Jude realizes she has autism," Chyna laughed. "To them, she's just Mabel."

As Mabel continued to make her mark in this world, Chyna began to feel the need to give back to the people who brought her into it.

"I needed to find a way to contribute, but I didn't know how," she said. "But with my past postpartum experience and history, one of my biggest puzzle pieces to working through that, was movement."

Chyna said that as soon as she was able, she carefully, gingerly, stepped back into the world of movement; through slow yoga, gentle stretching, and short walks.

By spring of 2023, she realized she needed a goal, and she figured out a way she could combine her love of movement, with her need to give back to Sick Kids and the NICU; the Toronto Half Marathon, set for that October. "I signed up for the marathon at midnight," she said, "and that next morning, I ran for the first time."

After months of training, she finished the race. 23 minutes faster than her original goal.

"This race will always mean so much to me," she said in an Instagram post to raise awareness. "The start of the route takes me right past the doors of the hospital I was airlifted to after Mabel's birth. It takes me right overtop of the underground tunnel I was wheeled through countless times in order to see her. I run right by Sick Kids Hospital, where we learned she would in fact survive, and we would be taking her home to meet her family."

Mabel is nearly three years old, and has an infectious zest for life. /Danielle Meredith

On Oct. 20, just this past weekend, she completed her second TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon. All the while raising funds for Sick Kids. She had set out with a goal of raising $1000, and blew that goal out of the water.

Because it's never about the timing of the run, or the training. It's never about the running gear or the medals or the race bibs.

It's not even about Chyna and Sam.

It's always been about Mabel. The story of her beginning, of where she came from, of who she's becoming.

It's always been about Mabel, and the people who saved her life, who held her hand, who believed in her journey.

It's always been about Mabel, the light she brings into the world, the joy she adds to her family, the love she carries in her heart.

It's always been about moving, for Mabel.

PA Day open house days at the Cultural Centre this fall

Looking for something exciting to do during the PA Days this fall? Join us at our "PA Day Open House" on Friday, Oct. 25 and Friday, Nov. 22 and visit Nature's Place from 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Visitors can explore exhibits that highlight our natural heritage, including the most recent display about pollinators along the Gull River. Visitors can also take part in hands-on interactive activities and enjoy a range of creative crafts led by our instructors. Admission to Nature's Place is by donation.

In addition, don't miss our free PA Day movies from 1 to 2:30 p.m. both days, co-hosted by the Cultural Centre and the HCPL – Minden Branch. *Casper* (1997) will be shown on Oct. 25, and *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* (2000) will be shown on Nov. 22. Light refreshments will be provided, but visitors are welcome to bring their own snacks for the movie. Our PA Day Open House is a fantastic opportunity to spend your PA day, learning, creating, and enjoying time here at the Cultural Centre.

The Cultural Centre is located at 176 Bobcaygeon Road, Minden and is open year-round from Tuesday to Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The final day of the seasonal opening for the Minden Hills Museum & Heritage Village and Nature's Place is Saturday, Oct. 12.

Submitted

Salt Cellars release *Sky Compass*

The Salt Cellars perform during their album release party at the Dominion Hotel and Pub in downtown Minden on Saturday evening. The band performed several songs from their newest album *Sky Compass* in front of a packed restaurant. /ADAM FRISK, Special to the *Times*

Haliburton County Huskies

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M VS Haliburton County Huskies

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Learn the ropes: A road map to healthcare services

Where: Royal Canadian Legion Branch 129, 719 Mountain Street, Haliburton
When: Sunday, Oct. 27, 3 to 6 p.m.
Register by Monday, Oct. 21, 2024 by email at atachhevents@gmail.com or call Connie Wood 705-457-7215.
Afterwards, enjoy a casual meal of beef brisket or vegetable chili, buns and pumpkin tart.
Keynote speakers: Jen Burns-West Chief Nursing Executive and VP Clinical and Community Support Services, Haliburton Highlands Health Services Christine Keenan , Project Coordinator, Kawartha Lakes Haliburton Ontario Health Team, Lauren Wilson, Pharmacist/Owner, Pharmasave
Chris Parish, Commander Clinical Programs, Haliburton County, Paramedic Service
Kim Ballantyne, Senior Manager, Patient Services, Home andCommunity Care Support Services.

FOHCPL 16th Annual Library Fundraiser - An Afternoon with R.H. Thomson

When: Sunday, Nov. 24, 1 to 3 p.m.
Where: Royal Canadian Legion Branch 129, 719 Mountain Street. Haliburton
Guest speaker is R.H. Thomson, author of "By the Ghost Light". R.H. Thomson is also known for his role as an actor in Road to Avonlea and the Murdoch Mysteries. Join us for a silent auction, refreshments and an informative presentation!
R.H. Thomson will have books available for purchase on site. Tickets are $25, cash or cheque only. Tickets can be purchased at the Minden Book Nook or by contacting Pat Brezina at 705-286-1958 or Sue Sisson at 705-286-2000. Proceeds for this event support library programs throughout our county, thank you for your ongoing support
Recurring Events

Recurring events

Cards/Euchre/Cribbage

When: Thursdays at 2:30 p.m.
Where: St. George's Church
617 Mountain Street
Lakeside Church Service
When: Sunday at 9 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.
Where: 9 Park Street, Haliburton.
Whoever you are, wherever you've been, you are welcome here.

Weekly Meat Rolls

When: Every Saturday, 3 p.m.
Where: Coboconk Legion, Hwy 48 and 35
Join us for our weekly meat draw at the Coboconk Legion. Five spins for $10. The first four rounds are for highest and lowest score with two winners per round. The last round is for a prepare-it-yourself dinner for two. Additional spins for this round are available for $2 each. Call 705-454-8127 or email info@coboconklegion.ca for more information.

HHHS Arts Extravaganza raises over $70,000

The Haliburton Highlands Arts Extravaganza held at Sir Sam's Ski Chalet on Saturday, Oct. 19, benefitted the HHHS Foundation "Here For You" Campaign for diagnostic imaging. The extraordinary event, organized by Chris Bishop and several volunteers raised a net of $71,000. The crowd of 140 people were very generous bidding on silent, live, and online auction items.

They also enjoyed delicious appetizers and the great music of Carl Dixon. Highlights include the online auction of the Ethel Curry painting donated by Don and Sheila Popple ending in a last minute bidding war, the live auction had neighbours and friend fighting it out for the artwork donated by several noted artists as well as the book that started it all - the 1988 Haliburton Highlands coffee table books donated by Chris Bishop.

Thank you to the organizing committee for bringing this community together and this event to life. And a huge thank you to the artist, the business community, the sponsors and donors for your incredible support.

Submitted

Melanie Klodt Wong, HHHSF executive director, with Don Popple and Chris Bishop stand with an original Ethel Curry painting which was donated by the Popple family to raise money for digital imaging equipment at HHHS. /DAVID ZILSTRA staff

Ontario Horticulturalists meet for second time in 45 years

The Minden and District Horticultural Society hosted over 120 gardeners from 17 Ontario horticultural societies to conduct business and talk plants on Oct. 19 in Minden. According to long time member Elinor Kernohan "this is only the 2nd time in 45 years that the Minden group has hosted this event. The last time was about 25 years ago." Delegates from as far away as Coburg and Port Hope were able to take in the beautiful fall colour on their drive north and enjoy a locally catered lunch.

Society President Connie Walker from Carnarvon said, "that volunteers had been working for months to organize this important event for people in the gardening community and our efforts were well received." Walker singled out Carolyn Perks to thank her for her contributions to the success of the event.

In addition to the comradery, many came to hear from keynote speaker, Paul Zammit. Zammit is a Professor of Horticulture and Environmental Studies at Niagara College, and well-known garden expert heard every Monday on CBC Radio One. He challenged his audience to learn to work with the garden by rethinking what is beautiful. "People come to gardens for more than just pretty plants. They come to relax, to meditate, to photograph insects, and to engage in lifelong learning," he said. To support wildlife and the food web that all life requires he encouraged his audience to stop tidying up their gardens. He asked his audience to rethink some of their garden practices such as deadheading, bagging up leaves, and growing for size and bloom. "Deadheading your flowers gives you more blooms but don't forget your garden also feeds the birds and insects," he said. He urged his audience to do their best to grow more native plants and avoid invasive plants. He said, "not to worry what the neighbours think and practise chop and drop composting where organic matter is left where it is pruned, rake whole leaves onto garden beds because shredding your leaves kills beneficial caterpillars and other life forms."

The Minden and District Horticultural Society meets monthly to conduct business and hear from guest speakers. With over 70 members, the Society puts on one of the most well attended monthly speaker series in the County. Its meetings are open to non members for a nominal fee of $5 and new members are welcome. No experience required. The Youth Garden Club organizes lots of fun and educational events for very young gardeners. You can thank the local Society for keeping Minden beautiful. Volunteers put in most of the plantings in Minden Village and along the Riverwalk with support from the township of Minden Hills. You can also thank Society volunteers for redoing the garden beds at the Minden Legion.

Submitted

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	1						2	8
		9	8	5	4			
3		1	5	7		9		
					2	8	4	
				6				
9		6						
					6		8	
			2	3		1		

Level: Intermediate

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Answers on page2

THE TOWNSHIP OF MINDEN HILLS
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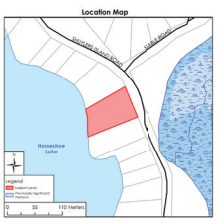
PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Corporation of the Township of Minden Hills has received an application to consider a by-law to stop up, close, and convey the parcel of land more particularly described as follows:

1. **File No. PLSRA2024027:** Part of the original shore road allowance along the shore of Horseshoe Lake, lying in front of 1203 Shuylers Island Road located within Part Lot 14, Concession 7, Geographic Township of Minden; and



The above noted application is available for inspection in the Planning Department located at 7 Milne Street, Minden, Ontario by appointment only. Additional information may be obtained by contacting the undersigned.

AND TAKE NOTICE should you wish to provide comments with respect to the above referenced application, please submit in writing those comments to the undersigned not later than **November 22, 2024.**

AND FURTHER TAKE NOTICE any person who claims that their land will be prejudicially affected is asked to contact the undersigned at their earliest convenience.

AND TAKE FURTHER NOTICE if deemed advisable, a By-law giving effect to the proposed closure and conveyance will be passed by the Council for the Corporation of the Township of Minden Hills. Please note that a Council meeting to consider a By-law for the above referenced applications will be scheduled at a later date following the requiste commenting period.

Amanda Dougherty, B.A. (Hons)
Manager of Planning
Township of Minden Hills
705-286-1260 Ext. 506
adougherty@mindenhills.ca

Porzuczek and family to bring Minden ER fight to Queen's Park

A call for action on rural healthcare

On Wednesday, Oct. 23, Patrick Porzuczek and his family will take their fight to save the Minden Emergency Room directly to Queen's Park. Joined by his eight-year-old daughter Kinsley, who has been the driving force behind his campaign, Patrick will deliver testimonials from affected residents and petitions to provincial leaders in a bid to restore critical healthcare services to Minden and other rural communities. They will also sit in the legislature and are expected to be formally recognized during the Question period.

Over a year ago, Kinsley, who suffers from a serious heart condition, personally asked Premier Doug Ford to have a conversation with her father about the Minden ER closure. The closure puts her life at risk every time she experiences an episode, as emergency care is now much farther away. Despite her heartfelt plea at Ford Fest, the family has yet to see meaningful action from the government.

Premier Ford reached out to Patrick after being publicly called out at the International Plowing Match for not having that promised conversation. "On Oct. 1, Ford called me, and his exact words were: 'If you are ever down at Queen's Park, let me know, I'll have you in my office for a chat.' I'm holding him to that," says Patrick. However, despite follow-up attempts, no further action has been taken.

The campaign has also highlighted the continued absence of local MPP Laurie Scott throughout this ongoing fight. Scott has not responded to the committee's open letter, nor has she addressed the urgent concerns about the closure of the Minden ER.

Patrick, alongside the dedicated Save the Minden ER committee, continues to amplify the cause through their highly active Facebook page, engaging supporters and raising awareness of the life-threatening impacts of rural hospital closures. The permanent closure of the Minden ER, along with similar closures across rural Ontario, is placing lives at risk.

Helen Trinka, a key member of the committee, emphasizes the urgency: "We're going to keep showing up and pressuring the government until a satisfactory solution is found. The status quo isn't good enough for Patrick's daughter or our community. We deserve better."

The Porzuczek family and their supporters are determined to ensure rural Ontarians, including those in Minden, receive equitable access to healthcare services and are not forgotten by the provincial government.

Submitted

No sour feelings here for pickleball

Pickleball has been taking the world by storm. A fun sport that has elements similar to tennis, ping-pong, and badminton, Pickleball for players 16 plus takes place at the S. G. Nesbitt Memorial Area on Wednesdays from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. There is a fee of $5.14 per adult and $3.11 per senior. /TIM YANO Staff photographer

Over 6,000 wildlife-related collisions

The Central Region of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) would like to raise the public's awareness of the increasing risks of wildlife-related motor vehicle collisions in the upcoming months.

Between 2021 and 2023, there were 6,066 wildlife-related collisions in OPP Central Region: 2021 - 1,820, 2022 - 2,053, 2023 - 2,193

The majority of wildlife-related collisions occur from October to December, with 85.5 per cent involving deer. Deer are more active during the end of the year due to mating season and are often on the move searching for food.

Safety tips for drivers:

• Reduce speed: Slower speeds give you more time to react if an animal suddenly appears on the road, especially at dawn or dusk when visibility is reduced

• Watch for signs: Use caution in areas of known high animal populations, which are often indicated by roadway signs

• Use high beams wisely: When driving at night, use high beams on empty roads when there's no oncoming traffic to give yourself more time to spot and react to wildlife on the road

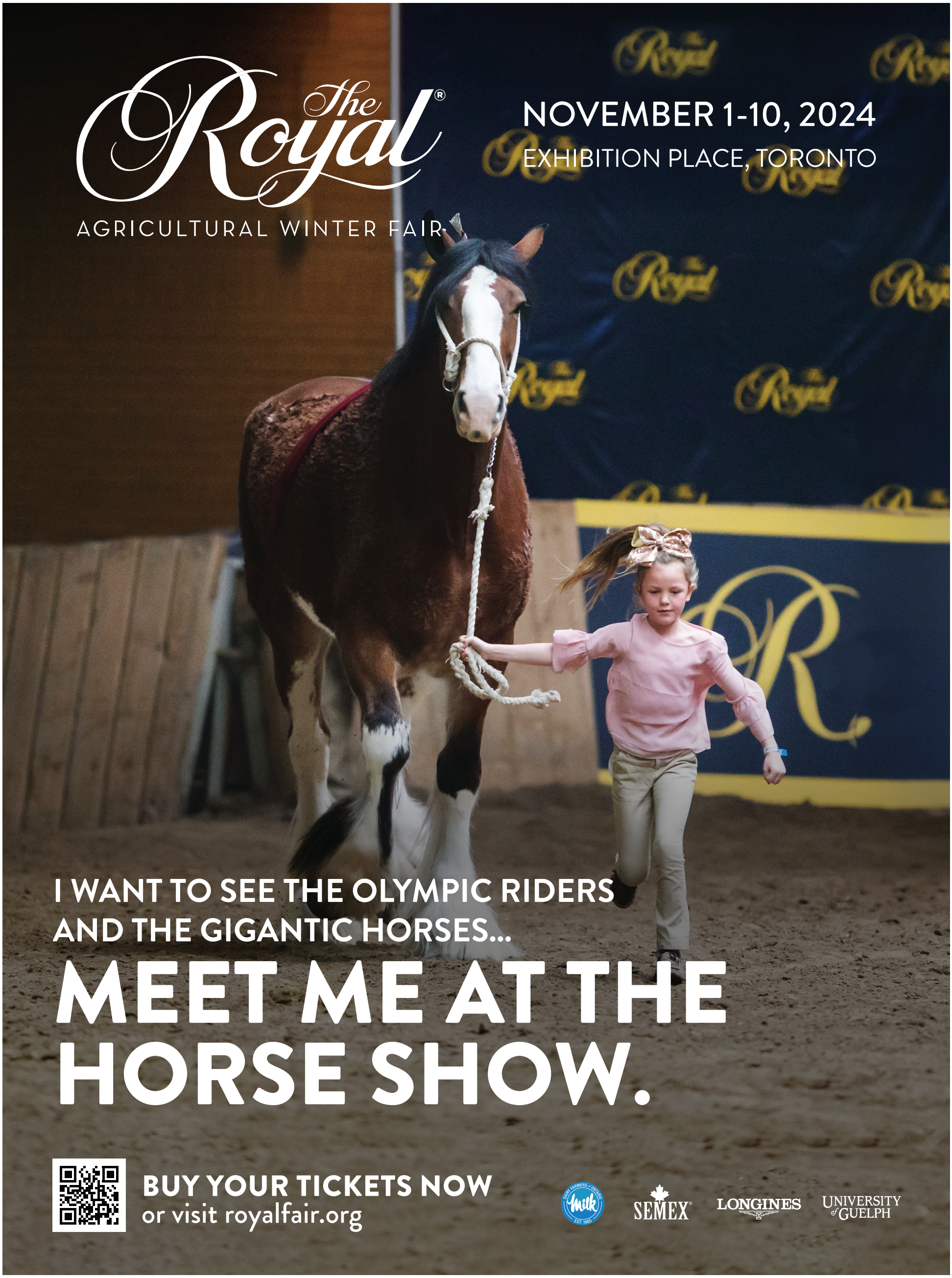
• Watch for movement: Look for reflections from your headlights, which often catch the eyes of wildlife

• Brake firmly, but don't swerve: If a collision seems imminent, it's safer to brake firmly rather than swerving, which could lead to losing control of your vehicle or colliding with another vehicle or fixed object.

• Always stay sober, alert, undistracted and seat-belted when driving

• If you see wildlife near the road, reduce your speed and be prepared to stop. Honk your horn to alert the animal and signal other drivers. Let's work together to ensure a safe driving environment for everyone.

Submitted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"Miracle on Worchester Avenue" by PJ (Phyllis) Sisson. Saturday, October 26, 2 p.m. - 4 p.m. Stanhope Fire Hall, Northshore Road, Algonquin Highlands Help Phyllis celebrate her 80th birthday and 30th Anniversary of the Miracle. All are welcome.
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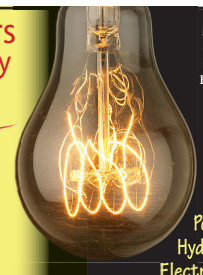

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Zoning change approved for Hwy 35

by Ariel White

Anson, Hindon and Minden council passed both the official plan amendment and by-law to re-zone the Highway 35 corridor to allow further retail businesses to be established along the Highway 35 bypass. There was no one in attendance to object to the change, despite earlier concerns expressed by downtown business owners.

Council held a meeting with local business representatives in late August of this year to discuss their thoughts on the prospect of re-zoning the highway commercial portion of the highway. At that time there was a concerted protest from members of the Downtown Business Improvement Association. However, this presence was not apparent as the zoning amendment and by-laws were passed in front of a virtually empty gallery.

Planning Administrator Sherry Rea was on hand to answer any last minute questions the council had, regarding the specifics of the amendment. She assured council that under the amendment, although retail stores would be permitted, professional offices such as accountants or lawyers, would not be allowed based on the notion that services such as this would be of little interest to the travelling public.

"I don't think it's been an easy time for any of us," said Reeve Jeanne Anthon. "I know I have had many sleepless nights wondering about the implications of this." Sherry Rea replied, "At the same time though, I think that we will have a wonderful opportunity once the highway is done."

The Ministry of Transport has unveiled plans for the redevelopment of the bypass from the County Road (formerly Highway) 121 south intersection

(more on page 3)

While older folks may cringe at the thought of cooler days ahead, for young people, autumn heralds the celebration of Hallowe'en. Along with the many decorated front yards throughout the community, many residents are selecting a pumpkin to transform into the traditional Jack-O-Lantern. Jake Walker, 9, of Minden and Julie Moore, 10, of Haliburton, found themselves in patch of their own this past week when they went looking through the many pumpkins on display in front of Dollo's IGA in Minden.

Bright colours and fine detail make these wood carvings attractive pieces in this year's members' show at the Agnes Jamieson Gallery in Minden. Close to 50 local artists and artisans have contributed paintings, carvings, fabric art and work in other media for the display. The cedar waxwing is the work of Grant Plooard while the wood duck was created by Gerald Hicks. Visitors to the show, which continues until October 31, are invited to vote for the best of the show in a number of categories and select the most outstanding exhibit of all.

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